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Message Text

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64
ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

SAM-01 IO-14 SAJ-01 NEA-11 EB-11 FEA-02 SCI-06 COME-00

INT-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIEP-02 DRC-01 /157 W
---------- 094986
R 071820Z FEB 74
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6689
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
USEC BRUSSELS UNN
USNATO 3493
USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS PARIS 3438

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, FR
SUBJECT: FRENCH ATTENDANCE AT ENERGY CONFERENCE: PRESS COMMENT

SUMMARY: FRENCH PRESS HAS STRUCK FEW NOTES IN COMMON IN REACTING TO ANNOUNCEMENT OF GOF DECISION TO ATTEND WASHINGTON CONFERENCE AT JOBERT LEVEL. THERE IS SOME AGREEMENT THAT JOBERT'S CHIEF REASON FOR BEING THERE IS TO ENSURE THAT PROCEEDINGS DO NOT STRAY FROM EEC POSITION AND FRENCH IDEAS, AND THAT CONFE-RENCE ITSELF DEMONSTRATES RIGHT OF OIL-CONSUMER COUNTRIES
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TO GET TOGETHER TO DISCUSS ENERGY PROBLEMS. BUT

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COMMENTATORS GO SEPARATE WAYS OTHERWISE ---FIGARO, FOR EXAMPLE, VIEWING CONFERENCE AS DEPRIVED BY FRENCH INITIATIVES OF CHARACTER U.S. WISHED TO GIVE IT, WHILE LE MONDE SAW CONFERENCE AS SETBACK FOR QUAI D'ORSAY. END SUMMARY.

1. UDR PAPER LA NATION TOOK SOME PAINS TO DEFEND FRENCH ATTITUDE TOWARD WASHINGTON CONFERENCE, AND ITS POSITION IN ENERGY MATTERS, FROM DOMESTIC CRITICS WHO HAD SNIPED AT FRANCE'S "AVERSION" TO ALIGNING ITSELF WITH U.S. AND TO "ATLANTIC" DIPLOMACY. "FRANCE WILL BE PRESENT IN CONDITIONS SUCH THAT THE WORLD WILL KNOW AHEAD OF TIME OF ITS HESITATION, ITS POSITION, AND ITS MOTIVES," PAPER SAID, AND THERE CAN BE NO CHARGES OF GOF ANTI-AMERICANISM (FROM CENTER REFORMIST PARTY) OR ACQUIESCENCE IN U.S. IDEAS (FROM COMMUNISTS). EVEN IF FRANCE IS ONLY COUNTRY AT CONFERENCE TO MAKE ITS VIEWS EXPLICIT, "SHE WILL NOT BE ALONE" IN HAVING DOUBTS ABOUT A MEETING WHICH LOOKS TOO MUCH LIKE A COUNTER-ATTACK OF THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES". FRANCE'S EEC PARTNERS, PROCLAIMED LA NATION, "HAVE RALLIED TO OUR VIEWS".

2. BUT LE MONDE DISAGREED, IN FRONT-PAGE IN EDITORIAL FEBRUARY 7.
TEXT APPROVED BY EEC MINISTERS TUESDAY IN BRUSSELS IS CLOSE TO FRENCH VIEWS, PAPER ACKNOWLEDGED, "BUT VALUE OF THIS KIND OF DOCUMENT IS OFTEN RATHER SYMBOLIC. WHAT COUNTS ABOVE ALL FOR THE U.S. IS THAT EUROPE IN ITS ENTIRETY IS COMING TO WASHINGTON, WHATEVER ITS STATE OF MIND." WASHINGTON HAS "GAINED SPEED" OVER FRENCH PROJECTS (EUROPE-ARAB CONFERENCE AND UN CONFERENCE) AND "IT IS DIFFICULT TO DENY THAT, FOR THE QUAI D'ORSAY, THIS IS A SETBACK". MORE IMPORTANT, ARGUED LE MONDE, THOUGH WASHINGTON MEETING MAY NOT RESULT IN ANY "INSTITUTIONAL PROLONGATION", EVEN EUROPEANS ADMIT THAT CONFERENCE COULD SET UP WORKING GROUPS ON A LONG LIST OF SUBJECTS.
"ISN'T THIS THE SAME THING, IN SUBSTANCE IF NOT IN FORM"? ASKED THE NEWSPAPER. "ON THIS SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC, DIPLOMATS ATTACH MUCH IMPORTANCE TO WORDS; ON THE OTHER SIDE, THEY ACT".

3. NEXT DAY, AFTER GOF DECISION TO ATTEND CONFERENCE HAD BEEN ANNOUNCED, LE MONDE EDITORIAL SAW IT AS CONFIRMATION OF "REAR GUARD" TACTICS "BEGUN BY MESSRS JOBERT AND POMPIDOU IN UNCLASSIFIED

RECENT MONTHS VIS-A-VIS THE AMERICAN GIANT." IF U.S. LAUNCHES AN INITIATIVE TO "RE-GROUP THE ATLANTIC CAMP UNDER ITS LEADERSHIP", FRANCE BEGINS BY "RAISING OBJECTIONS, ENGAGING IN PROCEDURAL BATTLES, STIFFENING ITS EUROPEAN PARTNERS, AND OFTEN SUCCEEDS IN POKING ENOUGH STICKS THROUGH THE SPOKES OF THE AMERICAN CHARIOT TO SLOW OR ALTER ITS PATH. BUT WHEN THE U.S. DECIDES TO FORCE THE CADENCE, FRANCE IS OBLIGED TO FOLLOW". NEWSPAPER DESCRIBED MR. KISSINGER AS PICKING UP WITH ONE HAND

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WHAT HE HAD PUT DOWN WITH THE OTHER, AS GETTING BACK TO
WORKWITH RENEWED VIGOR ON HIS "GREAT PROJECT TO RESTRUCTURE
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S., EUROPE AND JAPAN, A PROJECT WHICH
FRANCE HAD BEEN ABLE TO DELAY WITH VAGUE DECLARATIONS OF LITTLE
IMPORTANCE". LE MONDE ASKED WHETHER SECRETARY'S PLAN ISN'T,
IN FACT, WHAT ESSENTIALLY LIES BEHIND WASHINGTON'S APPEAL FOR THE
SOLIDARITY OF COUNTRIES WHICH ARE CERTAINLY ALL OIL CONSUMERS,
BUT WHOSE INTERESTS ARE IN FACT "STRONGLY DIVERGENT". IN ANY
EVENT, PAPER WENT ON, ONE RESULT OF CONFERENCE WILL
"WITHOUT DOUBT" BE TO "ACCENTUATE THE IRRITATION ALREADY VISIBLE"
BETWEEN SECRETARY KISSINGER, "BECAUSE OF HIS POWER", AND JOBERT, "WHO
TRIES TO COMPENSATE FOR HIS WEAKNESS BY GUERILLA
TACTICS ALL THE MORE SOUR SINCE SOME OF HIS PINPRICKS ARE
BADLY AIMED."

4. IN FIGARO, ECONOMIC EDITOR ALAIN VERNAY CALLED WASHINGTON
MEETING "ONE CONFERENCE AMONG OTHERS", I.E., NOTHING EXTRA-
ORDINARY, AND SAID IT HAS "LOST THE EXCEPTIONAL CHARACTER
MR. KISSINGER WANTED IT TO HAVE." IN LIGHT OF PROPOSALS FOR
AN EEC-ARAB MEETING, OR A LARGER MEETING OF CONSUMERS AND PRO-
DUCERS UNDER UN AEGIS, SAID VERNAY, THE KISSINGER PLAN
FOR ENLARGED CONTACTS BETWEEN AN "ATLANTIC ACTION GROUP" AND
OIL EXPORTERS "NO LONGER SEEMS TO HAVE MUCH CHANCE OF
REALIZATION". THUS ARE ELIMINATED FRANCE'S TWO PRINCIPAL
"FEARS"---OF AMERICAN "HEGEMONY" IN OIL, ECONOMY AND MONEY;
AND OF GIVING MIDDLE EAST OIL PRODUCER REASON TO SEE A "CARTEL"
OF INDUSTRIAL NATIONS BEING SET UP WITHOUT THEM AND HENCE AGAINST
THEM. THUS ALSO, WROTE VERNAY, THE AMERICAN HOPE FOR AN ECONOMIC
PAX AMERICANA "IN THE LARGEST SENSE OF THE TERM" IS DISAPPOINTED.
BUT VERNAY SAW DANGERS FOR EUROPE NONETHELESS. ONE OF THESE IS
FACT THAT CURRENT "INDISPENSABLE COOPERATION" IN RESEARCH, TECH-
NOLOGY, AND ENERGY SUPPLY CANNOT BE IMPROVED "WITHOUT THE HELP
OF THE COUNTRY WHICH IS THE WORLD'S CHIEF PRODUCER OF OIL, COAL
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AND NUCLEAR ENERGY". ANOTHER IS DIFFICULTY OF FACING MONETARY
PROBLEMS ARISING FROM ENERGY PROBLEMS WITHOUT THE HELP OF THE COUNTRY
"WHOSE RESOURCES ARE THE BIGGEST AND WHOSE CURRENCY IS THE
INSTRUMENT OF PAYMENT FOR OIL SUPPLIES". THIRD AND MOST DANGEROUS,
SAID VERNAY, IS THAT DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN BIG USERS OF OIL COULD
PREVENT ACHIEVEMENT OF "PRIMORDIAL GOAL FOR THE WEST, WHICH IS
LINKED WITH A MINIMUM SUCCESS OF THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE---
CONFIRMATION OF AND ACCELERATION OF THE REDUCTION OF CRUDE PRICES
NOW VISIBLE IN THE MARKET." THESE DANGERS, VERNAY SUGGESTED,
WILL ACCUMULATE " IF WASHINGTON LOSES ITS POISE AND ENGAGES IN
"BRUTAL AMERICAN-ARAB BILATERAL OUTBIDDING WHICH SOME OF ITS PARTNERS
ALREADY SUSPECT IT OF DOING DISCREETLY".
MESSRS KISSINGER AND JOBERT, HE CONCLUDED, "HAVE TOO MUCH FEELING
FOR THE LONG TERM TO FALL INTO SUCH TRAPS".

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5. OTHER COMMENTATORS TOOK OTHER POSITIONS:"JOBERT IS GOING TO WASHINGTON TO KEEP EEC PARTICIPANTS WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF TUESDAY'S AGREEMENT IN BRUSSELS", SAID LES ECHOS. COMBAT FELT FRANCE, IN GOING TO WASHINGTON, HAS CHOSEN NOT TO PUSH ITS VIEWS TO POINT OF PROVOCATION, AND THUS MADE A CONCE
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Draft Date: 07 FEB 1974
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Event:
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Disposition Remarks:
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
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